

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-NINTH SESSION
Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
63rd meeting
held on
Tuesday, 11 July 1995
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 63rd MEETING

Chairman:

Mr. TEIRLINCK

(Belgium)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/49/SR.63
28 July 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

95-81153 (E)



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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 107: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/49/L.67 concerning agenda item 34 (A/C.5/49/69)

1. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that document A/C.5/49/69 described the expenses already incurred in connection with the International Civilian Mission to Haiti (MICIVIH) and the estimated costs of extending the mandate of MICIVIH to 7 February 1996. Expenditure since the beginning of 1994 was estimated at \$11,966,800, while extending the Mission's mandate to the end of December 1995 would require an additional amount of approximately \$11,483,700. The total amount required for 1994-1995 was therefore \$23,450,500. Since the General Assembly had already appropriated \$3,987,100 for the biennium, an additional appropriation of \$19,463,400 was required. For the period from April 1994 to March 1995, the General Assembly had authorized the Secretary-General to enter into additional commitments of not more than \$15,692,000. Therefore, the total amount approved by the General Assembly thus far was \$19,679,100.
2. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had reviewed the Secretary-General's statement concerning draft resolution A/49/L.67 on extending the mandate of United Nations participation in MICIVIH until 7 February 1996.
3. In reply to its inquiries concerning the Secretary-General's proposal that the staff should be reduced from 442 to 396, the Advisory Committee had been informed that administrative support for MICIVIH would be provided by the administrative structure of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH). During its visit to Haiti in May 1995, the Advisory Committee had observed the newly developed approach to providing integrated service support to both military and civilian staff of UNMIH and MICIVIH, which seemed to be working satisfactorily.
4. Paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's statement indicated that the General Assembly had authorized a total of \$19,679,100 for the biennium 1994-1995, comprising \$3,987,100 in appropriations and \$15,692,000 in additional authorized commitments. The Advisory Committee had been informed that estimated expenditure in 1994 had been lower than the total amount authorized because the Mission had been expelled from Haiti by the country's de facto authorities in July 1994 and had not resumed its activities until the end of October 1994. In addition, Mission personnel had been evacuated for security reasons in October 1993 and had not returned to Haiti until January 1994.
5. The Secretary-General estimated the total requirements for 1994-1995 at \$23,450,500, which was approximately \$3.7 million more than the amount already authorized by the General Assembly. Bearing in mind the existing appropriation and commitment authority, and in the light of expenditure trends for the balance of the year, the Advisory Committee felt that there was no immediate need to appropriate additional resources for the Mission. Accordingly, it recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that the adoption of draft resolution A/49/L.67 would bring the estimated costs for 1994-1995 to a

deployment of an additional 8,500 troops between July and December 1995 and of 4,000 stand-by troops during two of those six months.

12. The total cost estimate of about \$297 million was significantly lower than the estimate provided by the Secretary-General in his letter of 9 June 1995 to the President of the Security Council (S/1995/470/Add.1) because it assumed that the stand-by force would be deployed for two months instead of six and that the additional forces would number 8,500 instead of 12,500; in addition, it reflected the voluntary contributions formally offered by Member States, which offset some \$21.2 million of the budget.

13. In view of the position taken on the issue by some States members of the Security Council, the Secretary-General had concluded that a mixed formula consisting of both assessed and voluntary contributions would be the most acceptable and realistic way of financing the increase. Accordingly, he had proposed that the difference between the previously authorized troop strength and the average monthly deployment over the six-month period up to the end of December 1995, excluding the rapid reaction force, should be financed through assessed contributions of approximately \$137 million, of which some \$118 million pertained to the current mandate period ending 30 November 1995. The remaining costs of the rapid reaction force would be financed through voluntary contributions to a sub-account of the UNPROFOR Special Account.

14. In order to accommodate up to 12,500 additional troops, it was absolutely essential to make additional resources available to meet the operation's needs in terms of equipment, logistical support and administrative leadership. Moreover, the Security Council had decided to set up three separate but interlinked missions within UNPROFOR, which would create additional administrative complications, while the Secretary-General had proposed that an Assistant Secretary-General should be placed in charge of the administration and management of the operation.

15. In sum, the General Assembly was being asked to take note of the overall level of resources required for the reinforcement of UNPROFOR, so that the Secretary-General could inform Member States of those estimated costs in appealing for voluntary contributions; to appropriate and assess the amount of \$118,200,000 to accommodate the expansion for the period from 1 July to 30 November 1995; and to invite Member States to make voluntary contributions in cash and in kind to the sub-account of the UNPROFOR Special Account to meet the additional cost of \$138,557,300.

16. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had serious concerns about the methodology used in preparing the proposed budget for the reinforcement of UNPROFOR and about the lack of information on firm and assured voluntary contributions and on contingency planning in case some of those contributions failed to materialize. The budget document was unusually complex and the Advisory Committee had already noted serious difficulties in relating the estimates to actual requirements.

17. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended that detailed consideration of the report contained in document A/49/540/Add.4 should be deferred until the

fiftieth session of the General Assembly. The Secretary-General should provide the Advisory Committee with updated information on the proposed budget no later than September 1995 so that it could report to the General Assembly by October.

18. In the meantime, the Advisory Committee recommended that the requirements relating to the increase in UNPROFOR personnel should be considered in the light of General Assembly resolution 49/233, part IV, paragraph 3, which required that decisions on commitment authority and assessment for the start-up or expansion of peace-keeping operations in an amount exceeding \$50 million should be referred promptly to the General Assembly. In accordance with that resolution, the Advisory Committee recommended an amount of \$100 million gross for the period from 1 July to 30 November 1995.

19. If the General Assembly accepted the Advisory Committee's recommendations, the Secretary-General should manage the commitment authority so as not to prejudice any of the decisions which the General Assembly might eventually take when it considered the budget estimates themselves. In that connection, the Advisory Committee intended to consider the request for the post of Assistant-Secretary-General for Management and Administration of the United Nations Peace Forces in the context of its consideration, at its next meeting in the autumn, of the update of the estimates contained in the Secretary-General's report.

20. Mr. LACLAUSTRA (Spain), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the financing proposed for the rapid reaction capacity was exceptional in that it was aimed at the immediate operational reinforcement of UNPROFOR, and that it should not, under any circumstances, constitute a precedent for the financing of other peace-keeping operations.

21. The European Union attached special importance to the principle of collective responsibility for financing the peace-keeping operations established by the competent bodies of the United Nations, as set forth in Article 17, paragraph 2, of the Charter.

22. The European Union took note of the Secretary-General's proposals concerning assessments and voluntary contributions. It supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on commitment authority and assessment in the amount of \$100 million gross for the period from 1 July to 30 November 1995 and on the deferral of detailed consideration of the Secretary-General's report until the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

23. The European Union strongly supported the decision of three of its member States to provide military reinforcements for UNPROFOR. It attached the utmost political importance to the deployment of the rapid reaction force and to the provision of adequate resources to enable it to function effectively. All Member States of the United Nations should make every effort to supplement their assessed contributions with voluntary contributions in cash or in kind. He trusted that the Fifth Committee would adopt a resolution in support of the financing of the rapid reaction force.

24. Mr. TOYA (Japan) said that his delegation supported Security Council resolution 998 (1995) and appreciated the efforts of Member States which had supplied UNPROFOR with troops and equipment. However, it was uncomfortable with

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the Secretary-General's proposal on financing arrangements. In his letter to the Security Council (S/1995/470/Add.1), the Secretary-General had recommended that the costs of the reinforcement of UNPROFOR should be considered an expense of the Organization to be borne by Member States in accordance with Article 17, paragraph 2, of the Charter. Japan therefore wondered why the Secretary-General had subsequently decided to recommend an unusual financing arrangement combining assessed and voluntary contributions. The reinforcement of UNPROFOR was a normal part of peace-keeping operations, to which all Member States were required to contribute. The proposed scheme would put a substantial part of the operation on an unstable financial basis and might worsen the financial situation of the United Nations. It could also undermine the ability of the rapid reaction force to carry out its mandate by making its strength and resources dependent on such a precarious arrangement. His delegation accepted the Advisory Committee's recommendation that, pending a more detailed consideration of the matter, the Secretary-General should be authorized to commit up to \$100 million.

25. Mr. GJESDAL (Norway) expressed his delegation's support for the decision to deploy the rapid reaction force, which would provide immediate military reinforcement to UNPROFOR to reduce its vulnerability. The decision was also of great political importance. It was vital that the rapid reaction force should be given adequate resources to meet its operating expenses. His delegation endorsed the view of the European Union and Japan that the financing of peace-keeping operations was a collective responsibility that must be shared by all Member States and was therefore against voluntary financing of peace-keeping operations or elements thereof. His delegation would not oppose a consensus on the proposed method of financing for the first six months but stressed that it should not be considered a precedent for subsequent periods or other operations and should not lead to the development of a new, two-tier system for peace-keeping financing and to new financial difficulties for the Organization.

26. Mr. PASCHKE (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), introducing the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the use of international contractual personnel (ICP) in UNPROFOR (A/49/914, annex), said that the approach adopted for UNPROFOR was a viable means of meeting the Organization's needs when it was not possible to recruit sufficient qualified support personnel for peace-keeping missions in a timely and cost-effectiveness manner through the traditional channels. However, the approach adopted for UNPROFOR should be viewed primarily as an alternative, to be resorted to only when circumstances clearly warranted, such as when sufficient personnel could not be made available from the existing staff of the United Nations system, or when releasing the large numbers of staff needed would adversely affect the performance of the source office; the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services raised a number of issues concerning the UNPROFOR pilot project and formulated recommendations for corrective action.

27. A thorough review of the management structure in the civilian component of the United Nations Peace Forces (UNPF) had recently been completed, which had included a follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations made by the Office as a result of its audit of the ICP pilot project. While UNPF had taken corrective action in some areas, it had so far failed to act on a number of important recommendations. There was no evidence, for example, that any steps

had been taken to remedy deficiencies in the existing contractual arrangements with international service agencies or to replace international personnel with local recruits where appropriate. International contractual personnel represented 70 per cent of the international civilian component of UNPF. There was room for reduction in the overall staffing level of the mission but the reductions in the number of ICP posts should be over and above the posts identified as suitable for local recruitment.

28. Mr. GOKHALE (India) said that his delegation welcomed the observations contained in the report concerning procurement and the manner in which contractors had been chosen during the early phase of the pilot project. He called for immediate action to address the matter and requested follow-up reports, presented orally, if necessary on the compliance by the Department of Peace-keeping Operations with the relevant recommendations. As to whether the principle of geographical representation was relevant to the recruitment of contractual personnel, he recalled the principles enshrined in Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations. While supporting all efforts aimed at reform and at cutting back on expenditure and waste, his delegation hoped that those concerns would not undermine important principles on which the Organization was based. His delegation welcomed attempts to introduce a minimum salary level. The report merited a fuller discussion at the fiftieth session.

29. The CHAIRMAN said that he took it that the Committee wished to recommend that the General Assembly should take note of the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the UNPROFOR pilot project (A/49/914).

30. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 119: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION FOR THE REFERENDUM IN WESTERN SAHARA (continued) (A/49/884 and A/49/937)

31. Mr. PASCHKE (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services) drew attention to two reports prepared by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (A/49/884 and A/49/937), dealing respectively with the audit and follow-up of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and the investigation of allegations of irregularities and mismanagement. The audit carried out in September and October 1994 covered mainly cash management, staff costs, procurement, transport, contingent-owned equipment and voluntary contributions of goods and services. The emphasis was on protection and utilization of assets, timeliness and cost-effectiveness of procurement and internal controls.

32. In February 1995, a special follow-up audit of MINURSO had been carried out in view of plans to expand the Mission and the need to strengthen the management and financial control systems. Certain allegations were under investigation and the results, which highlighted the need for better administrative support and strengthening of the day-to-day management of the identification process in MINURSO, had been reported.

33. Following submission of the audit report, the Field Administration and Logistics Division of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations formulated additional comments in June 1995 (reflected in paragraphs 37, 41 and 44 of

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document A/49/937) on three issues relating to aircraft requirements, adjustment of vehicle fleet and installation of electronic trip monitors in vehicles. It had since confirmed that it was continuing to review and revalidate aircraft requirements on an ongoing basis and no less than once per year and that the MINURSO vehicle establishment had been reviewed and adjusted. Further, the recommendation regarding the installation of electronic trip monitors to record vehicle speeds had been accepted for implementation action.

34. He reported that the MINURSO Administration and the Department of Peace-keeping Operations had been responsive to the audit recommendations and had, overall, taken prompt, remedial action.

35. The CHAIRMAN said he took it that the Committee wished to recommend that the General Assembly should take note of the two reports in documents A/49/884 and A/49/937 and endorse the recommendations contained therein.

36. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 113: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (continued)

37. Mr. OUMMIIH (President of the Headquarters Staff Committee and President of the Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations (CCISUA)) said that under the Staff Regulations and the Staff Rules, staff representatives were mandated to perform representational activities and the Secretary-General was required to maintain contact with the staff on issues relating to staff welfare.

38. Staff rule 108.1 provided for the establishment of staff representative bodies at Headquarters and at various other duty stations. Furthermore, Administrative Instruction ST/AI/293 of 15 July 1982 specified that the functions of staff representatives were official, that staff representatives should be granted reasonable official time off to enable them to carry out their functions promptly and efficiently and to attend meetings of the Staff Council, and that each Staff Council, Staff Committee or corresponding representative body at designated duty stations should be provided with secretarial assistance, office space and communication and reproduction equipment.

39. The Staff Committee in New York represented over 2,000 members of the Secretariat deployed to three field missions in addition to the 7,500 staff members serving at Headquarters. Hence, the current full-time release of the President and two Vice-Presidents was by no means excessive. In addition, in his capacity as President of the Coordinating Committee of International Staff Unions and Associations, he was required to deal with highly specialized issues relating to the International Civil Service Commission and the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board.

40. The activity of staff representatives should be recognized as a positive contribution to the smooth working and efficient management of the Organization. With respect to posts for which they qualified, staff representatives should be considered on an equal footing with other staff members. They should be afforded job security so that they could carry out their functions without fear

of intimidation. Posts for staff representatives on full-time releases should remain blocked for the duration of their tenure in office.

41. At the recent Staff Management Coordination Committee meeting held in Amman, an agreement had been reached on the determination of reasonable time for releasing staff representatives and on procedures for dealing with the issue. Finally, full-time release for all heads of staff unions/staff associations, irrespective of the number of staff represented, was not only justified but mandatory.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

42. Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America) requested the Chairman to issue a correction to his earlier letter to The New York Times in which he had taken issue with remarks made about the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the work of that Committee. The United States delegation had understood that the purpose of the original letter was to communicate the views of those delegations which had spoken in support of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee at the 61st and 62nd meetings of the Committee. Without entering into the substance of the matter, her Government believed that, on a procedural level, its position had been misrepresented since it had never mandated the Chairman to express support for the Chairman of the Advisory Committee in the name of the entire Fifth Committee. Her delegation had merely acquiesced in the sending of a letter containing the views of the delegations concerned.

43. The CHAIRMAN said he had been mandated to send the letter by the Committee as a whole, on the basis of a proposal put forward by the Canadian delegation. The United States had not raised any objection at the time, and if it disagreed with anything in the letter it should make its views known to The New York Times independently. If the United States had made a statement on the matter at an earlier date, he would certainly have included its views in the letter. But unless the Committee obliged him to comply with the request by the United States delegation, he was powerless to issue a correction.

44. Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America) said she was not asking the Chairman to write a letter on behalf of the United States Government; she merely wanted him to correct the erroneous statement that he had been mandated to write the letter by the Committee as a whole.

45. Mr. HANSON (Canada), supported by Mr. JU Kuilin (China), Mr. DJACTA (Algeria), Ms. BUERGO (Cuba), Ms. PEÑA (Mexico) and Mrs. ARAGON (Philippines), said that the Chairman had correctly stated the facts of the matter and expressed support for the position taken by the Chairman.

46. The CHAIRMAN said that the general view of the Committee was that he had received a mandate to proceed in the way that he had.

The meeting rose at noon.